

## SPECIAL EDITION ISSUE: A Call to Action in *Perspectives on Social Work*

### EDITORIAL

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The devastation of Hurricane Harvey and its impact on the community is something from which many Houston residents are still trying to recover. Moving toward any resemblance of “normalcy” requires strength and determination at the individual, family, and community level. At the Graduate College of Social Work, that strength and determination was felt immediately as faculty and students began working together to build a network of support among each other and a rapid response to the greater community. As a result, our editorial board felt it important to document the experiences of some of our doctoral students and faculty directly involved. Each submission was reviewed internally by our editorial board and faculty chair.

Prior literature supports how individual resilience, when motivated by supportive networks, could lead to an increase in ability to manage crisis and stress during traumatic experiences (Norris et al. 2007). In this issue, there are three unique perspectives shared. We are excited to share reflections from our Dean, Dr. Alan Dettlaff, who helped to coordinate efforts that led to social work students and staff volunteering to not only help at disaster relief shelters, but to also support each other with housing, supplies, rides to campus, and emotional support (2017). Our second essay is a personal account from a fourth year doctoral student on Hurricane Harvey, the loss of her home, and its impact on her life (Webb, 2017). Our final submission is a collaborative piece submitted by two doctoral students who gathered information from conversations had with social workers who volunteered during the relief efforts. They offer insight on the call to action, the use of social work skills during disaster relief, and recommendations for practice (Zhou and Crawford, 2017).

These essays represent the core of our social work values as they intersect with real life traumatic events and the reconciliation our own vulnerabilities during those experiences. Although we acknowledge that future writings might offer empirical, evidenced-based research on the disaster, we publish this special edition to lift up the voices from our graduate college community.

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